

Remarks / Arguments:

Introduction

The pending claims are 72-81, 84, 95-106, 110-112, and 129-133. Claims 68, 70, 71, 93, 94, and 107-109 have been canceled by this amendment. Claims 72-81, 84, 95-106, 110-112, 129-133 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced therein.

Dependent claims 72, 76, 97, 103, and 133 stand rejected based only upon 35 U.S.C. § 112. They have not been rejected based upon prior art. Without agreeing with the rejection, these claims have been rewritten in independent form and amended to render the § 112 rejections moot, as explained in more detail below, in order to expedite allowance of this application.

Claim Rejections

Claims 68, 71-81, 93-112, and 129-133 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, based upon the PTO's belief that they fail to comply with the written description requirement.

The Office Action rejected claim 71 because it used the term "circumferentially reinforced at locations along its length." Claim 72 has been rewritten in independent form by incorporating the recitations of claims 70 and 71. Claim 72 rewrites the phrase objected to in the Office Action as "wherein said primary graft body is carried by a plurality of wire hoops." The new phrase is supported at least by page 8, lines 8-11; page 9, lines 15-19; page 12, lines 3-6; page 22, lines 22-24; and Figs. 1A, 2A, 5-7.

The Office Action rejected claim 109 because it used the term "circumferentially reinforced." Claim 133 has been rewritten by incorporating the features of claim 109. Claim 133 rewrites the phrase objected to in the Office Action as "wherein at least one of the first graft body and the second graft body is carried by a metal wire structure." This phrase is supported at least by the same pages and figures referenced above regarding rewritten claim 72.

The Office Action rejected claim 73 based upon its belief that "'sutures' are not mentioned as being used to attached 'reinforcement wires.'" Claim 73 has been amended to depend from claim 72 and to change "reinforcement wires" to "wire hoops." Accordingly, claim

73 now recites that "at least one of the wire hoops is attached to said primary graft body via sutures." This is supported at least by page 10, lines 20-27; and page 12, lines 11-13. Moreover, page 8 of the Office Action "agrees with the Applicant that the specification discloses the attachment of a graft body to wire via sutures."

The Office Action rejected claim 81 because it used the term "crests." Applicants have amended claim 81, in part, by deleting the term "crests."

The Office Action rejected claims 93 and 107-109 because they use the terms "inlet ends" and "outlet ends." Claim 93 has been canceled and claim 97 has been rewritten in independent form, including the features of canceled claim 93. The following changes have been made to rewritten claim 97:

- "first graft body inlet end" has been changed to "first graft body proximal end"
- "first graft body outlet end" has been changed to "first graft body distal portion"
- "second graft body inlet end" has been changed to "second graft body proximal portion"
- "second graft body outlet end" has been changed to "second graft body distal portion"

Claims 107-109 have been canceled. Claim 133 has been rewritten in independent form, including the features of canceled claim 109.

The following changes have been made to the aspects of rewritten claim 133 that incorporated the features of claim 109:

- "said first graft body having an inlet end and an outlet end" has been changed to "said first graft body having a proximal end and a distal portion"
- "said second graft body having an inlet end and an outlet end" has been changed to "said second graft body having a proximal portion and a distal portion"

The Office Action rejected claim 111 because it uses the term "closed sinusoidal shape." Claim 111 has been amended by changing the term to "sinuous configuration." This term is supported at least by the Abstract; the Figures; page 8, lines 8-11; and page 9, lines 19-21.

The Office Action rejected claims 105 and 106 because they use the term "skirt portion." Each of these claims has been amended by changing the term to "frustoconical portion." "Frustoconical portion" is supported at least by page 11, lines 11-21.

The Office Action has also rejected claim 106 based on the proposition that the recited length of the frustal portion (18 mm) is not described in the specification. To the contrary, page 16, lines 5-6 states: "The overall length of each of the exemplary frustoconical parts 14, 18 is about 18mm."

The Office Action has rejected claims 129 and 130 because they use the terms "differing radiopacity," "radiographic indicia," "composite radiographic image," and "rotational orientation."

Claim 129 has been amended by changing "different radiopacity" to "radiopaque marker." Claim 130 has been amended by changing "radiographic indicia" to "radiopaque marker." "Radiopaque marker" is supported at least by page 28, lines 1-12, for example.

Claim 130 has also been amended by changing "composite radiographic image of said radiographic indicia" to "profile of said radiopaque marker." This change is supported at least by page 39, lines 15-23.

Claim 130 has also been amended by changing

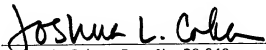
- "varies with the rotational orientation" to "varies with the rotation"
- "the rotational orientation of said at least one of said first graft body" to "the rotation of said at least one of said first graft body"
- "optional adjustment of the rotational orientation" to "optional adjustment of the rotation."

This change is supported by page 39, lines 15-23, for example.

Conclusion

For all of the above reasons, Applicants submit that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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